

Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel claims 1 - 27 and add new claims 28 - 49.

Listing of the Claims:

Claims 1 - 27 (CANCELED)

28. (NEW) A method for treating valvular conditions of a patient's heart, said method comprising:
- (a) selecting a cardiac reinforcement device, said cardiac reinforcement device comprising:
 - (i) a synthetic biomedical material which can be applied to an epicardial surface of the heart;
 - (ii) said synthetic biomedical material comprising a continuous mesh construction, said continuous mesh construction defining a plurality of open cells;
 - (iii) said synthetic biomedical material formed into a jacket to surround said heart with said jacket having an internal volume to receive said heart;
 - (b) applying said cardiac reinforcement device to said surface of said heart under a parietal layer of a pericardium of said heart; and
 - (c) securing said cardiac reinforcement device to said surface of said heart.
29. (NEW) The method for treating valvular conditions according to claim 28 wherein said method for treating includes treating valvular insufficiency.
30. (NEW) The method for treating valvular conditions according to claim 28 wherein said step of selecting includes selecting biomedical material that is a substantially non-elastic material.

31. (NEW) The method for treating valvular conditions according to claim 28 wherein said step of selecting includes selecting biomedical material having a maximum predetermined size selected to constrain cardiac expansion beyond a predetermined limit.
32. (NEW) A method for treating cardiac disease, said method comprising:
- (a) selecting a cardiac reinforcement device, said cardiac reinforcement device comprising:
 - (i) a substantially non-elastic biomedical material than can be applied to an epicardial surface of the heart;
 - (ii) the cardiac reinforcement device having opposite connected sides;
 - (b) applying said cardiac reinforcement device to said surface of the heart by applying said device to opposite sides of the heart;
 - (i) the opposite connected sides of the cardiac reinforcement device overlying the opposite sides of the heart; and
 - (c) securing said cardiac reinforcement device to said surface of the heart with said cardiac reinforcement device opposite connected sides urged together by a spacing less than an unconstrained diastolic expansion of said opposite sides of the heart.
33. (NEW) The method according to claim 32 wherein said step of selecting includes selecting a cardiac reinforcement device including a jacket with a predetermined size selected for the jacket to surround said surface of the heart and circumferentially constrain cardiac expansion.
34. (NEW) The method according to claim 32 wherein said step of applying includes applying the cardiac reinforcement device to said surface of the heart under a parietal layer of the pericardium.

35. (NEW) The method according to claim 32 wherein said step of applying includes applying the cardiac reinforcement device to said surface of the heart over a parietal layer of the pericardium.
36. (NEW) The method according to claim 32 wherein said step of applying includes applying the cardiac reinforcement device to said surface of the heart using a minimally invasive surgical procedure.
37. (NEW) The method according to claim 32 wherein said step of selecting includes selecting a cardiac reinforcement device having a maximum predetermined size, said predetermined size selected to constrain cardiac expansion beyond a predetermined limit.
38. (NEW) The method according to claim 32 wherein the method for treating cardiac disease includes treating one of: heart failure; cardiomyopathy; valvular disease; and cardiac arrhythmia.
39. (NEW) A method for reducing diastolic volume of a patient's heart, said method comprising:
- (a) selecting a cardiac reinforcement device, said cardiac reinforcement device comprising:
 - (i) a substantially non-elastic biomedical material which can be applied to an epicardial surface of said heart;
 - (ii) said biomedical material comprising a plurality of open cells, each open cell defined by multiple sides, each open cell sharing at least one of said multiple sides with an adjacent open cell;
 - (b) applying said cardiac reinforcement device to said surface of said heart by applying said biomedical material to diametrically opposite sides of said heart; and
 - (c) securing said cardiac reinforcement device to said epicardial surface of said heart.
40. (NEW) A method according to claim 39 wherein:

- (a) said step of selecting includes selecting a cardiac reinforcement device having a maximum predetermined size, said predetermined size selected to constrain cardiac expansion beyond a predetermined limit; and
 - (b) said step of selecting includes selecting a cardiac reinforcement device including a jacket with a predetermined size selected for the jacket to surround said surface of the heart and circumferentially constrain cardiac expansion.
41. (NEW) A method for minimally invasive treatment of cardiac disease of a patient's heart, said method comprising:
- (a) making a first and second minimally invasive incision into said patient's thorax;
 - (b) passing a thoroscope into said first incision for intra-thoracic visualization;
 - (c) passing a cannula into said second incision to a position for applying a cardiac reinforcement device to said patient's heart, wherein said cardiac reinforcement device comprises:
 - (i) a biomedical material which can be applied to an epicardial surface of said heart;
 - (d) applying said cardiac reinforcement device to said epicardial surface of said patient's heart;
 - (e) removing said thoroscope from said patient's thorax; and
 - (f) closing said first and said second incisions in said patient's thorax.
42. (NEW) A method according to claim 41 wherein said step of passing including applying a cardiac reinforcement device includes a cardiac reinforcement device comprising:
- (a) a jacket having a base end and an apical end, said base end having an opening for applying said jacket to said surface of said heart by passing said jacket over said surface of said heart such that when applied to said surface, said base of said jacket is oriented toward said base of said heart.
43. (NEW) A method according to claim 41 wherein:
- (a) said step of passing including applying a cardiac reinforcement device includes a cardiac reinforcement device having a maximum predetermined size, said

predetermined size selected to constrain cardiac expansion beyond a predetermined limit.

44. (NEW) A method according to claim 42 wherein said step of passing including applying a cardiac reinforcement device includes a cardiac reinforcement device comprising:
- (a) a guide wire capable of passing around a circumference of said base end of said jacket to selectively expand said opening at said base end of said jacket; and a guide tube capable of passing around a circumference of said base end of said jacket;
 - (i) said guide wire being passed through said guide tube at said base end of said jacket.
45. (NEW) A method according to claim 44 further comprising a step of:
- (a) passing through said cannula into said patient's thorax said jacket having said guide tube passed around said base end of said jacket and said guide wire passed through said guide tube;
 - (b) applying said jacket over said surface of said heart such that said base end of said jacket is oriented towards said base of said heart;
 - (c) removing said guide wire from said guide tube;
 - (d) removing said guide tube from said base end of said jacket; and
 - (e) removing said cannula from said patient.
46. (NEW) A method for treating cardiac disease, said method comprising:
- (a) selecting a cardiac reinforcement device, said cardiac reinforcement device comprising:
 - (i) a substantially non-elastic biomedical material which can be applied to an epicardial surface of said heart;
 - (ii) said substantially non-elastic biomedical material comprising a plurality of continuous strands of said biomedical material, said strands defining a plurality of open cells;
 - (iii) said cardiac support device having opposite connected sides;

- (b) applying said cardiac reinforcement device to said surface of said heart by applying said device to diametrically opposite sides of said heart and with opposite sides of said biomedical material overlying said opposite sides of said heart; and
 - (c) securing said cardiac reinforcement device to said surface of said heart with said cardiac reinforcement device opposite connected sides urged together by a spacing less than an unconstrained diastolic expansion of said opposite sides of the heart.
47. (NEW) A method according to claim 46 wherein:
- (a) said step of selecting includes selecting a jacket with a predetermined size selected for said jacket to surround said surface of said heart and circumferentially constrain cardiac expansion.
48. (NEW) A method according to claim 46 wherein:
- (a) said step of selecting includes selecting a jacket with a maximum predetermined size selected to constrain cardiac expansion beyond a predetermined limit.
49. (NEW) A method according to claim 46 wherein the method for treating cardiac disease includes treating cardiomyopathy.